

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An offset printing press comprising:

a first plate cylinder;  
a first blanket cylinder for selectively contacting the first plate cylinder;  
an anilox inker for inking the first plate cylinder;  
a first motor directly connected to the anilox inker for driving the anilox inker and connected to the first plate cylinder for driving the first plate cylinder;  
a second plate cylinder;  
a second blanket cylinder for selectively contacting the second plate cylinder;  
a second anilox inker for inking the second plate cylinder; and  
a second motor directly connected to the second anilox inker for driving the second anilox inker and connected to the second plate cylinder for driving the second plate cylinder.

2. The press as recited in claim 1 wherein the anilox inker includes an ink form roll and an anilox roll, the first motors directly driving the ink form roll.

3. The press as recited in claim 2 wherein the ink form roll and the first plate cylinder have the same diameter.

4. The press as recited in claim 1 further comprising a third motor for driving the first and second blanket cylinders.

5. The press as recited in claim 4 wherein the anilox inker includes an anilox roll and an ink form roll, the first motor driving the ink form roll directly, and the anilox roll and the first plate cylinder through a set of gears, and the second anilox inker includes a second anilox roll and a second ink form roll, the second motor driving the second

ink form roll directly and the second anilox roll and the second plate cylinder through a second set of gears.

6. The press as recited in claim 4 wherein the first and second blanket cylinders are directly geared together.

7. The press as recited in claim 4 wherein the first and second blanket cylinders have direct gears separated from the other, with each direct gear being driven by the third motor.

8. The press as recited in claim 1 wherein the first plate cylinder is capable of being thrown off of the first blanket cylinder while the second plate cylinder continues a printing operation.

9. The press as recited in claim 1 wherein one of the first and second motor drives the first and second blanket cylinders.

10. The press as recited in claim 9 wherein the first anilox inker includes an ink form roll and the second anilox inker a second ink form roll, and wherein in a first mode the ink form roll is driven directly by the first motor, and the first plate cylinder, first blanket cylinder and second blanket cylinder are driven indirectly by the first motor.

11. The press as recited in claim 10 wherein the second plate cylinder is thrown off of the second blanket cylinder.

12. The press as recited in claim 10 wherein in a second mode the second motor drives the second ink form roller, the second plate cylinder, and the first and second

blanket cylinders.

13. The press as recited in claim 12 wherein the first plate cylinder is thrown off of the first blanket cylinder.

14. A method for driving a printing unit having a first anilox inker, a first plate cylinder, a first blanket cylinder selectively contacting the first plate cylinder, a second blanket cylinder, a second plate cylinder selectively contacting the second plate cylinder, and a second anilox inker, the method comprising the steps of:

- directly driving the first anilox inker using a first motor;
- indirectly driving the first plate cylinder using the first motor;
- directly driving the second anilox inker using a second motor; and
- indirectly driving the second plate cylinder using the second plate cylinder.

15. The method as recited in claim 14 further including driving the first and second blanket cylinders with one of the first and second motors.

16. The method as recited in claim 14 further including driving the first and second blanket cylinders with a third motor.

17. The method as recited in claim 14 wherein the first anilox inker includes an ink form roller and an anilox roller, the first motor directly driving the ink form roller.

18. The method as recited in claim 17 wherein the ink form roller and the first plate cylinder have the same diameter.